

colleagues to reduce and eliminate the scourge of addiction.

GOLD STAR FAMILIES

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, as Americans, we mourn with Gold Star families, but we cannot feel their pain. There is nothing anyone can say or do to really comfort families suffering the loss of a loved one. But there is a lot people can say or do to cause grieving families additional pain, as we have seen over this past week.

As Members of Congress, we are there for our constituents. They are our families. It is our obligation to speak up when they are hurt.

The loss of American servicemembers should not be politicized. Our fallen heroes should be honored.

Sergeant La David Johnson is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Jeremiah Johnson is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Bryan Black is an American hero.

Staff Sergeant Dustin Wright is an American hero.

The 28 men and women who lost their lives in service to their country this year are all American heroes. Let us honor their sacrifices and comfort their families, as has been the tradition in this country until last week.

□ 1800

RECOGNIZING BAT WEEK

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bat Week, which is an annual, week-long event highlighting the important ecological and economic benefits of bats.

With more than 1,300 different species worldwide, bats are both diverse in appearance and how they keep ecosystems balanced. Bats play an essential role with insect control, pollination, and seed dispersal. One bat can eat 2,000 to 6,000 insects each night, including moths, beetles, flies, mosquitoes, and more.

Because of their incredible appetites, farmers can use fewer pesticides to control insects. This helps our Nation's farmers and saves billions of dollars each year.

Mr. Speaker, bats also play other roles outside of our ecosystems, including in medical research. Scientists studying vampire bats have created anticlotting medication to help stroke victims.

These are just a small portion of the ways bats positively impact our daily lives, and I am pleased to see these wonderful creatures recognized during Bat Week.

I appreciate the great work being performed by private conservation organizations, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and many other State partners, such as the Pennsylvania Game Commission on Bat Week 2017.

HONORING BUFFALO POLICE OFFICER CRAIG LEHNER

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Buffalo Police Officer Craig Lehner, who lost his life in the line of duty this past week. On October 13, tragedy struck. Officer Lehner went missing while performing underwater recovery training in the Niagara River. For 5 days, State, local, Federal, and Canadian agencies heroically assisted in the search and recovery.

Officer Lehner lived a life of service to his country and to his community. A resident of south Buffalo, Lehner was a 9-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department, a 16-year National Guardsman who served in Iraq, and a member of the canine unit.

Those who knew Officer Lehner knew how much he loved his job and the people of Buffalo. Buffalo is the hardest working city in America, the city of good neighbors.

In the past several days, there has been an outpouring of support for Officer Lehner's family and the Buffalo Police Department. I want to extend thanks to the many brave first responders who worked around the clock in recovery efforts.

Officer Lehner, thank you for your service, and may you rest in peace.

TAX BREAK FOR SENIORS

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, every year, middle class seniors are forced to pay billions in taxes on their Social Security benefits. This tax is fundamentally not fair and penalizes folks who have paid into the system their entire lives.

There is a better way. We should give these seniors a tax cut, let them keep more of their benefits, and create a better, fairer system for all Americans.

In 1984, when Congress passed this tax on seniors, it was designed to only impact high-income seniors, about 14 percent. But the tax was never adjusted for inflation, and today, fully half of seniors are paying this onerous tax. In fact, there are over 280,000 Hoosiers making less than \$75,000 per year who are subject to this tax.

I introduced the Social Security Tax Fairness Act to give these seniors the tax break they deserve. This bill cuts taxes for seniors, single and married seniors, and ends the marriage penalty on Social Security benefits, too.

Under this bill, a retired married couple with \$70,000 in income will see \$2,000 in tax cuts. It is time to deliver tax cuts for every American, and this legislation would ensure Hoosier seniors aren't left behind either.

NEED FOR MORE FEMA INSPECTORS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, citing from The New York Times, "Outside Rachel Roberts' house, a skeleton sits on a chair next to a driveway, a skeleton child on its lap, an empty cup in its hand, and a sign at its feet reads, 'Waiting on FEMA.'"

I want to acknowledge that FEMA workers from around the country have worked without ceasing, but we have got to do a better job. My constituents in Houston, Harris County, Texas, after Harvey, are waiting on those inspectors.

That is the only way, Mr. Speaker, that they can begin the repair of their homes. Many people are there without coverage and truly need to have their homes repaired.

I have given suggestions. I am sorry that we didn't stand up enough Federal FEMA inspectors. But what about college students, people who are unemployed, using a FEMA app, dividing the area in sectors, finishing one sector then going to another sector? This includes the State of Florida as well. People are on hold for hours at a time.

I have spoken to those who are now looking at it. I want them to know that I appreciate them taking my call and reviewing this, but reach out for help. We have got to have more inspectors. If we do not have inspectors, they will not be able to repair their homes. If they cannot repair their homes, they are living in dangerous conditions. If they are living in dangerous conditions, the quality of life deteriorates.

Help us in Texas. We need more FEMA inspectors. We need them now.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF JOHN HANCOCK

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, when you look at the heavens tonight, you may notice a new bright star. My fellow Texans from Sugar Land and Fort Bend County have seen that star for years. It is our John Hancock.

John enjoyed life with us for 89 years. John is a native Texan, Houston proud, born on February 13 of 1928. He is a Korean Army veteran, 33 years with Mobil Oil, an investment adviser.

John loved many things. He loved University of Texas football, Hook 'em Horns. He loved his Astros, our baseball team. He loved his hometown of Sugar Land. He loved going to church